

Breastfeeding in the Workplace

WHAT EMPLOYERS NEED TO KNOW

Breastfeeding is Good Business

Employers that accommodate breastfeeding in the workplace benefit from:

- » Fewer infant medical expense claims because of lower rates of infant illness
- » Reduced staff turnover and loss of skilled workers after childbirth
- » Higher employer and employee satisfaction
- » Recognition as a family-friendly employer
- » Having breastfeeding employees with:
 - Fewer missed work days to care for sick infants
 - An earlier return to work after childbirth
 - Decreased levels of maternal stress
 - Improved productivity and staff loyalty

Breastfeeding Laws in Rhode Island

Employers should provide a breastfeeding mother with flexible breaks and a safe, clean, private place to pump breastmilk or breastfeed her child. *Section 23-13.2-1 (2003)*

A woman may breastfeed or bottle-feed her child in any place open to the public. *Section 23-13.5-1 (2008)*



Breastfeeding Warm Lines

Mothers may call any of these numbers with questions or concerns about breastfeeding. Support groups are also available through many of these hospitals.

KENT COUNTY HOSPITAL 737-7000 x3332
Lactation consultant will return call.

LANDMARK MEDICAL CENTER 769-4100 x2218
24-hour call-in assistance is available.

MEMORIAL HOSPITAL OF RI 729-2291
24-hour call-in assistance is available.

NEWPORT HOSPITAL 845-1110
24-hour call-in assistance is available.

SOUTH COUNTY HOSPITAL 782-8020 x1226
Lactation consultant will return call.

WESTERLY HOSPITAL 348-2229
24-hour call-in assistance is available.

WOMEN AND INFANTS HOSPITAL 1-800-711-7011
Monday through Friday 9 am to 9 pm.
Saturday and Sunday 9 am to 5 pm.
Leave a message and a nurse will return your call. Appointments are available for mothers after hospital discharge. Services are provided in English and Spanish.

Breastfeeding Resources for Mothers

FAMILY HEALTH INFORMATION LINE 1-800-942-7434
Bilingual answers to breastfeeding questions and referrals to local resources

RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH 1-800-942-7434
www.health.ri.gov/family/breastfeeding
Breastfeeding information and resources for RI mothers and health care providers

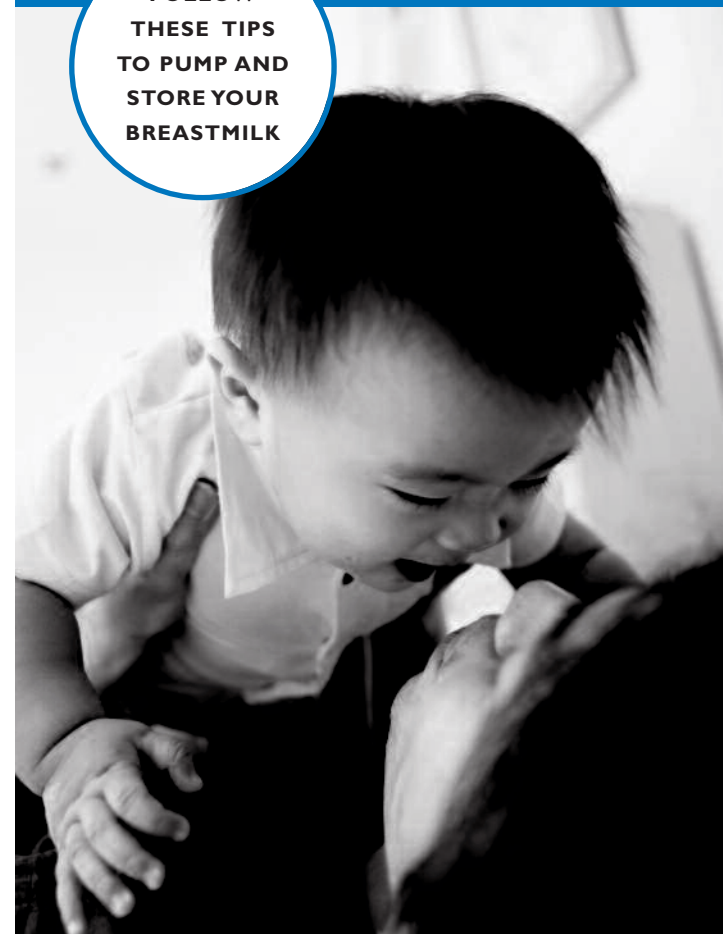
WOMEN, INFANTS & CHILDREN (WIC) 1-800-942-7434
www.health.ri.gov/family/wic
Breastfeeding promotion and support in the Rhode Island WIC Program

LA LECHE LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL 1-877-4-LALECHE
www.llli.org (1-877-452-5324)
Support from other breastfeeding mothers by telephone or at local meetings

NATIONAL WOMEN'S HEALTH INFORMATION CENTER 1-800-994-WOMAN
www.4woman.gov/breastfeeding (1-800-994-9662)
Bilingual breastfeeding information and resources for mothers

Breastfeeding and Going Back to Work or School

FOLLOW
THESE TIPS
TO PUMP AND
STORE YOUR
BREASTMILK



RHODE ISLAND
Breastfeeding
COALITION

Storing your milk

Store fresh breastmilk in one of the following ways:

- » Insulated bag/cooler with ice packs:
Up to 24 hours
- » Refrigerator: **Use or freeze within 72 hours**
- » Home Freezer: **Up to 3 months**

Fresh breastmilk may be kept at room temperature (77° or less) for up to 4 hours.

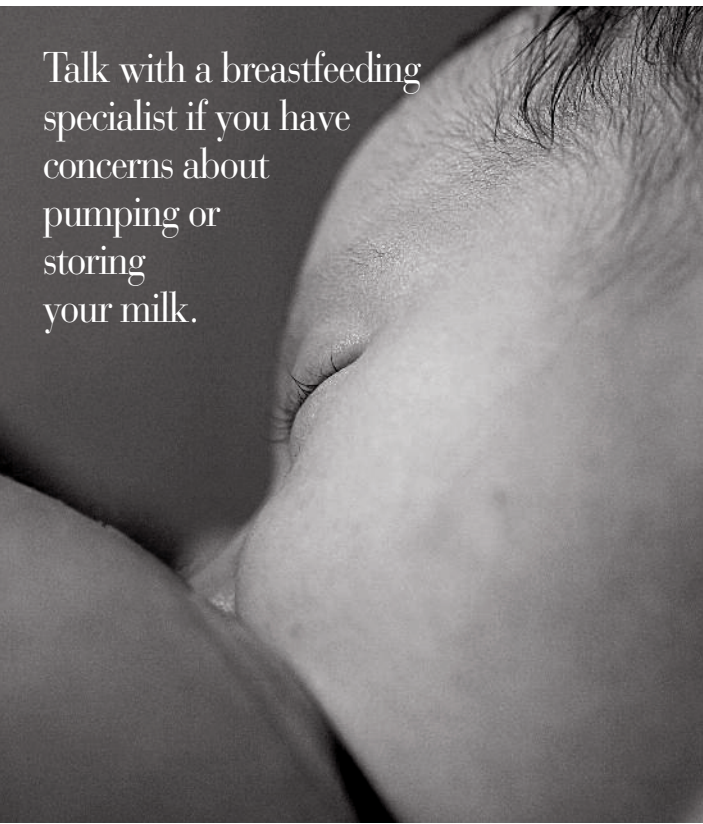
When storing breastmilk in the refrigerator or freezer:

- » Place breastmilk storage bags inside a larger bag or bowl to prevent tearing and holes.
- » Store frozen breastmilk in the back of the freezer. Never store breastmilk on the freezer door or in the front of the freezer.

Always carry breastmilk between your home and child care in an insulated bag or cooler with ice packs.



Talk with a breastfeeding specialist if you have concerns about pumping or storing your milk.



Planning your return to work or school

Talk with a breastfeeding specialist about your plans for returning to work or school.

Talk to your human resource manager, supervisor, or student advisor about your breastfeeding plans before you go back to work or school to make sure you have the support you need to keep breastfeeding. Many employers and schools will help you continue to breastfeed when you return to work or classes.

- » Ask about your options, like going back part time for a while or working at home for part of each day or week.
- » Find out where you can breastfeed or pump milk for your baby in a safe, clean, private space other than a toilet stall.
- » Ask about other ways your employer or school can help you continue to breastfeed, such as letting you use a refrigerator or allowing flexible breaks.
- » Give your employer the tear-off card in this brochure called *Breastfeeding in the Workplace*.

Helpful Tips

When your baby is a month old, begin giving her a bottle with your breastmilk three times a week so that she gets used to taking it. In the beginning, your baby may be more comfortable taking a bottle from someone other than you.

A couple of weeks before going back to work or school, begin pumping your breastmilk once a day to become comfortable with the process. Then you will have enough milk stored for your baby when you first return to work or school.

Share your breastfeeding plans with the person who will care for your baby while you are at work or school:

- » Provide information on storing, thawing, and feeding breastmilk.
- » Discuss your baby's usual feeding schedule. Ask the caregiver to time your baby's last feeding so your baby is hungry and ready to breastfeed when you arrive. Call if you are going to miss a feeding or be late.
- » Provide a back-up supply of frozen or refrigerated pumped breastmilk in case your baby needs to eat more often than usual.
- » If possible, arrange to have your baby brought to you or go visit your baby at lunch to breastfeed.
- » Ask for a comfortable place to breastfeed during drop-off, pick-up, or visits.

Breastfeed during the evenings, before bed, and on weekends as often as possible.



Pumping your milk

Wash your hands before pumping.

Use clean breast pump parts sterilized in a dishwasher or boiling water. You do not need to wash the tubing of electric pumps.

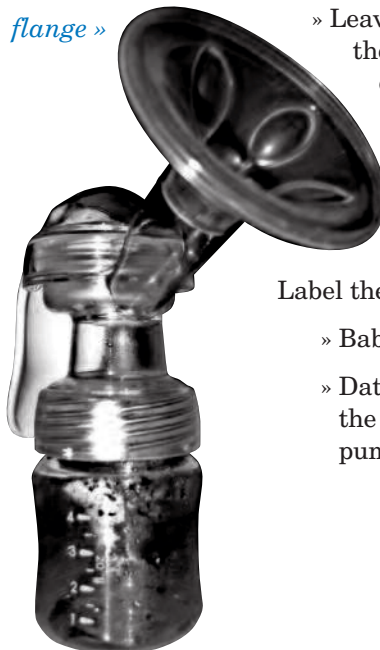
Hold the flange in place against your breast, centering the opening over your nipple.

- » If you are using a hand pump, create suction by gently pulling and pushing or squeezing the handle with your free hand, or using a foot pedal, imitating the nursing rhythm of your baby.
- » If you are using an electric pump, the motor will create suction for you. Start at the lowest speed and suction level and then gradually increase until comfortable.
- » Pump for up to 15 minutes on each side, until the milk stops flowing.

Pump breastmilk into either a bottle or special breastmilk collection bag.

- » Fill the container with only 2 to 4 ounces of breastmilk to avoid wasting unused milk.

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- » Leave some space at the top of the bottle or bag if you plan to freeze the breastmilk. Breastmilk expands as it freezes.

Label the container with:

- » Baby's name
- » Date and time that the breastmilk was pumped

Make breastfeeding work for you

If you plan to return to work or school after your baby is born, you can still breastfeed!

If you will miss one or more of your baby's usual feedings, you can pump your breastmilk while you are away. The milk you pump can be used to feed your baby on another day.

The more often you pump your breastmilk while you are away from your baby, the more milk your body will make and the longer you will be able to continue breastfeeding. The number of times you need to pump when you are away depends on your baby's age, how long you will be apart from your baby, and how often your baby breastfeeds when you are together. It is always best to pump at your baby's usual feeding time.

If you choose not to pump your breastmilk while you are at work or school, you can still breastfeed before you leave home each day and after you return.

DOCTORS SAY
IT IS BEST TO FEED
YOUR BABY ONLY
BREASTMILK UNTIL
HE IS AROUND
6 MONTHS OLD

A Rhode Island law called the Nursing Working Mothers Law asks an employer to give a breastfeeding mom flexible breaks and a safe, clean, private place to pump breastmilk or breastfeed her child.

Thawing frozen breastmilk

Tips for thawing frozen breastmilk:

- » Never thaw breastmilk on the stove, in a bottle warmer, or in the microwave. Heating breastmilk in these ways destroys important nutrients that protect a baby's health.
- » Thawed breastmilk may be kept in the refrigerator for up to 24 hours.
- » Never refreeze thawed breastmilk.

There are three different ways to thaw frozen breastmilk:

- » **Method 1:** Let the breastmilk thaw in the refrigerator.
- » **Method 2:** Hold the container of breastmilk under warm running water until the milk thaws and reaches room temperature.
- » **Method 3:** Put the container of frozen breastmilk into warm water until the milk thaws and reaches room temperature.

Feeding Tips

- » Use oldest breastmilk first.
- » Feed your baby breastmilk that is cool, at room temperature, or warmed by thawing.
- » Shake the bottle to mix the breastmilk.
- » Follow your baby's lead in the amount of breastmilk to feed. Stop feeding your baby when he loses interest.
- » Throw away any breastmilk left in the bottle within one hour after the feeding.
- » Do not reuse bottles until they have been cleaned.

BREASTFEEDING TIPS TO SHARE WITH YOUR CHILD CARE PROVIDER ARE POSTED AT WWW.HEALTH.RI.GOV/FAMILY/BREASTFEEDING/PROFESSIONALS-GUIDELINES.PHP



Tips for Supporting Breastfeeding Employees

To help employees successfully breastfeed when they return to work, employers can provide:

- » Flexible work schedules to allow moms time to breastfeed their babies or pump breastmilk during the workday.
- » A safe, clean, and private space other than a toilet stall where they can pump breastmilk.
- » A sink near the pumping space where they can clean pumping equipment.
- » A refrigerator for storing pumped breastmilk.

Other opportunities for breastfeeding support:

- » Develop and distribute a written policy outlining organizational support for breastfeeding employees.
- » Provide information on the benefits of breastfeeding to all employees.
- » Sponsor the services of a lactation consultant for breastfeeding employees.
- » Provide pumping equipment for breastfeeding employees to use while at work.

To be recognized as a Breastfeeding-Friendly Workplace, visit and complete the survey posted at www.health.ri.gov/family/breastfeeding/workplaces.php.

VISIT WWW.HEALTH.RI.GOV/FAMILY/BREASTFEEDING OR CALL THE FAMILY HEALTH INFORMATION LINE AT 1-800-942-7434 FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE